

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 SS-15

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P 021638Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4602

INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 25599

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON MAURICE LIGOT, NEWLY-
APPOINTED STATE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE

REF: PARIS 25052

1. MAURICE LIGOT'S PUBLIC CAREER HAS BEEN ONE OF REVERSES INVARIABLY FOLLOWED BY SUCCESS. BORN ON DECEMBER 9, 1927 IN THE DEUX-SEVRES DEPARTMENT IN WESTERN FRANCE, HE HAS NEVERTHELESS PASSED MOST OF HIS LIFE IN THE NEIGHBORING MAINE-ET-LOIRE DEPARTMENT. HOLDING A DOCTORATE IN LAW, HE BEGAN AS CHEF DU CABINET FOR THE AISNE PREFECT IN 1952, ENTERING ENA TWO YEARS LATER. UPON GRADUATION FROM ENA IN 1956, HE SERVED FIRST IN THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, MOVING INTO THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE IN 1958, THEN TO THE EC A YEAR LATER AS HEAD OF MISSION. FROM 1961 TO 1964 HE WAS ATTACHED TO THE ELYSEE'S SECRETARIAT FOR AFRICAN AND MALAGASY AFFAIRS HEADED BY JACQUES FOCCART. (NOTE: LIGOT'S INTEREST IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS IS FURTHER UNDERSCORED BY HIS PUBLISHED -- AND HIGHLY RESPECTED -- STUDY: "COOPE-
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RATION AGREEMENTS BETWEEN FRANCE AND FRANCOPHONE AFRICA"

AND HIS FREQUENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE "OVERSEAS LEGAL AND POLITICAL REVIEW.") FROM 1964 TO 1967, HE WAS BACK IN THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, FIRST AS ROGER FREY'S CHEF DU CABINET, THEN IN CHARGE OF PRESS RELATIONS. AT THIS TIME HE EARNED THE REPUTATION OF BEING IN-THE-KNOW ON MANY OF THE MINISTRY'S SECRET ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE NOTORIOUS BEN BARKA AFFAIR. AFTER BRIEF SERVICE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, WHEN OLIVIER GUICHARD WAS MINISTER, HE BECAME HEAD OF THE REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT (SINCE ABOLISHED). HE HAS BEEN TWICE MARRIED -- HIS FIRST WIFE DIED -- AND HAS THREE CHILDREN.

2. CONCURRENTLY WITH THE ABOVE, LIGOT HAS PURSUED THE CAREER OF ACADEMICIAN AS AN OFF-AND-ON LECTURER AT ENA AND AT THE PARIS LAW SCHOOL. FURTHERMORE HE WAS ELECTED MAYOR OF CHOLET IN THE DEUX-SEVRES IN 1965 AND GENERAL COUNCILLOR IN 1967, BOTH OF WHICH POSITIONS HE STILL HOLDS. IN THE 1967 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, DESPITE HIS PREVIOUS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE UDR, HE RAN AGAINST A GAULLIST AND WAS SO SOUNDLY BEATEN THAT HE SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATED GIVING UP A POLITICAL CAREER. AT THAT TIME, BECAUSE HE HAD HAD THE GALL TO RUN AGAINST A GAULLIST, HE EARNED THE CONDEMNATION OF POMPIDOU, FREY AND EVEN VALERY GISCARD D'ESTAING (THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS, VGE'S PARTY, WERE AT THAT TIME MORE CLOSELY ALLIED WITH THE GAULLISTS). IN THE 1973 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS HE BEAT THE SAME OPPONENT HE HAD RUN AGAINST IN 1967 AND ENTERED THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WHERE, IN

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 25599

SPITE OF HIS GAULLIST CONNECTIONS, HE JOINED THE
ASSEMBLY CENTRIST GROUP AND, AT THE SAME TIME, BECAME AN
OFFICIAL OF THE CONSERVATIVE NATIONAL CENTER FOR INDE-
PENDENTS AND PEASANTS PARTY (CNIP), THE SAME PARTY THAT
GAVE BIRTH TO THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS (RI). JUST
AFTER GISCARD'S 1974 VICTORY LIGOT JOINED THE RI PARTY.

3. LIGOT IS VERY POPULAR IN HIS HOME DISTRICT, HAVING
WON THE ACCLAIM OF HIS CONSTITUENTS FOR ATTRACTING IN-
DUSTRY -- I.E., JOBS -- TO THE DEUX-SEVRES. HE HAS MADE
TWO KNOWN TRIPS TO THE US: ONE IN 1964 AS FREY'S CHEF
DU CABINET, ON A PRESIDENTIAL-ELECTION WATCHING TRIP
WITH THREE OTHER GOF OFFICIALS; AND ANOTHER IN 1968, IN
HIS POSITION AS MAYOR, UNDER OFFICIAL USG INVITATION.
EMBASSY FILES REVEAL NOTHING ON LIGOT'S PERSONAL TRAITS;
BUT, IN VIEW OF HIS CONSTANT EFFORTS TO PROMOTE MAYORAL
EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE US AND FRANCE, IT CAN BE SAFELY
ASSUMED THAT HE IS WELL DISPOSED TOWARDS THE US. IN
HIS NEW POST HE MAY VERY WELL TRY, INsofar AS THAT IS
POSSIBLE, TO "GISCARDIZE" THE FRENCH CIVIL SERVICE
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(THOUGH THIS HARD-HEADED BODY SEEMS TO HAVE RESISTED ALL
SUCH ATTEMPTS SINCE NAPOLEON). LIGOT IS ONE OF THE
DARK HORSES IN THE NEW CABINET, A NAME THAT WAS NEVER
MENTIONED IN THE JULY/AUGUST PREDICTIONS AS TO WHO
WOULD REPLACE WHOM. BUT HIS RI CREDENTIALS ARE
GOOD AND HE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE A FAITHFUL EXECUTOR OF
MATIGNON AND ELYSEE POLICY.
RUSH

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